duty on tea, both of which measures were included in the Budget provisions. This insurance, it was suggested, pointed to a leakage of budgetary information, for which only a member or members of the Cabinet could be responsible, since they alone were informed of the contents of the Budget before its publication.

Rumours became so insistent that a Tribunal was set up to inquire into 'whether, and, if so, in what circumstances and by what persons, any unauthorised disclosure was made of information relating to the Budget for the present year or any use made of any such information for the purposes of private gain/ In the course of its proceedings the relations between Sir Alfred Butt, M.P., and Mr. Alfred Bates, both of whom had taken out Budget insurance, and Mr. Thomas, were investigated. Mr. Bates had, it appeared, paid over to Mr. Thomas .£20,000 for the right to publish his Autobiography in the *Leader,* a periodical mostly devoted to competitions, of which he was the proprietor. Needy authors might regard this payment as exceptionally handsome, especially in view of the fact that the Autobiography was as yet unwritten, but Mr. Bates pronounced himself satisfied with the arrangement.

In giving evidence, Mr. Thomas pointed out that he was always in his office by nine o'clock, and had therefore come to be called 'the charwoman's statesman'. His natural impulse, he said, had been to resign from the Cabinet when rumours impugning his honour began to circulate, but a friend had advised against it; 'For God's sake, Jimmy, don't resign, or all manner

of constructions will be put on it,' his friend had pleaded, and [e]l thought on the balance this was sound advice, and I carried on, answering all my questions, and braved up.' When the Tribunal's public sittings had ended, but before its Report had been prepared, he did resign, on the ground that, in view of the Vay in which my name and private affairs have been handled about, instead of being a source of strength to the Cabinet, I shall merely be a drag on it, and not in a position to pull my full weight/ Mr. Baldwin accepted his resignation with regret, adding: 'You have acted as I should have done in your place';